

FYI: Dimock emails
Terry Simpson to: John Krakowiak

12/13/2011 04:34 PM

From: Terry Simpson/ESC/R3/USEPA/US
To: John Krakowiak/R3/USEPA/US@EPA

Just wanted to pass these two emails along re: our discussion this afternoon so you can put them with the Dimock issue paper.

Terry

Terry Simpson, Regional QA Manager
US EPA Region 3
Environmental Science Center
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Voice: 410.305.2739
Fax: 410.305.3095
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Region 3 QA Website:
<http://www.epa.gov/region03/esc/qa/index.htm>

Only four types of organizations need to worry about data quality:
Those that care about their customers,
Those that care about profit and loss,
Those that care about their employees, and
Those that care about their futures.
- Thomas C. Redman (2006)

----- Forwarded by Terry Simpson/ESC/R3/USEPA/US on 12/13/2011 04:33 PM -----

From: Cynthia Metzger/ESC/R3/USEPA/US
To: Terry Simpson/ESC/R3/USEPA/US@EPA
Date: 12/05/2011 02:38 PM
Subject: Data review?

Terry - is there a way to find out who at EPA reviewed this data and whether we can take a look at it, too? Or did we?

EPA: No threat to Dimock water

By David Falchek (Staff Writer)
Published: December 3, 2011

After a preliminary review of well water tests in the heavily drilled area of Dimock, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency told residents their water poses "no immediate health threat."

The email sent to residents from Trish Taylor, community involvement coordinator for EPA Region 3, notes that the review is ongoing and pledged that the agency would continue to monitor the situation.

Read the email [HERE](#)

"While we are continuing our review, to date, the data does not indicate that the well water presents an immediate health threat to users," said the email. Ms. Taylor could not be reached for comment Friday.

While the EPA has no direct jurisdiction over Dimock water quality, residents invited the agency to review state and company water quality tests.

The EPA's email came two days after Cabot's state-ordered potable water deliveries stopped and the day after state Environmental Hearing Board Judge Bernard A. Labuskes Jr. denied residents an emergency hearing.

The EPA's comments were embraced by drilling advocates and Cabot Oil & Gas officials, but met with skepticism from residents convinced that drilling activity fouled their well water.

Cabot officials interpreted the EPA's email as confirmation of the company's test results - most of which is done through state-certified laboratories. "The EPA's findings are consistent with the results of thousands of water samples tested by Cabot over the last several years," the company said in a statement.

But some residents of the area made famous by flaming faucets object to the EPA's preliminary opinion. They say their water smells of natural gas or turpentine or is turbid and unusable.

Victoria Switzer, vocal skeptic of the gas industry, called the EPA statement "lunacy." But she didn't see it as a total setback, noting that the agency has yet to make a final determination. She notes the EPA did not do its own tests and she is hopeful the agency will continue to pay attention to the area.

An attorney for some residents asked Ms. Taylor to retract her statement. In a letter, Tate J. Kunke offered a list of substances found in Dimock water believed to have come from hydraulic fracturing fluid - substances rarely looked for in water testing.

"We do not feel it is wise for homeowners to potentially expose themselves to untested chemicals, even if a few that have been tested for appear to temporarily pass... standards," Mr. Kunke wrote. "Chronic, low level exposure to fracking chemicals is too great a medical risk to assume. Our clients are not lab rats."

Households in Dimock are looking for another source of water and plan to submit arguments before Judge Labuskes by Dec. 7.

Contact the writer: dfalchek@timesshamrock.com

Below is the email from EPA:

-----Original Message-----
From: Taylor.Trish <Taylor.Trish@epamail.epa.gov>
To:
Cc: Polish.David <Polish.David@epamail.epa.gov>
Sent: Fri, Dec 2, 2011 6:34 am
Subject: Follow-up status re: Nov 10, 2011 visit with Dimock PA residents
Dear Dimock Residents,
This email is a follow-up to the visits to Dimock area homes by EPA on November 10, 2011 and the subsequent review of well sampling data for wells impacted by the Cabot Oil and Gas Company drilling activities. EPA has conducted a preliminary review and screening of the data provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and residents. While we are continuing our review, to date, the data does not indicate that the well water presents an immediate health threat to users. EPA will continue to review available information related to the concerns of Dimock area residents. We are continuing to work with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania going forward on this issue.
Please feel free to call me or David Polish, Community Involvement Coordinator, at (215) 814-3327, if you have further questions.
Sincerely,
Trish Taylor, Community Involvement Coordinator
Hazardous Site Cleanup Division (Mailcode 3HS52)
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 3
1650 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA., 19103

phone: (215) 814 - 5539
fax: (215) 814 - 3015

Cindy Metzger, Director
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From: Terry Simpson/ESC/R3/USEPA/US
To: Cynthia Metzger/ESC/R3/USEPA/US@EPA
Date: 12/07/2011 02:56 PM
Subject: Fw: FYI - Formal Request for ATSDR Health Consultation - Dimock PA Drinking Water

I think this might answer your question re: Dimock data review. I hadn't gotten around to asking, it just happened to come to me today. Do you want to talk about how we could/should insert ourselves?

Terry

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----- Forwarded by Terry Simpson/ESC/R3/USEPA/US on 12/07/2011 02:55 PM -----

From: Angela McFadden/R3/USEPA/US
To: Judith Hykel/R3/USEPA/US@EPA, Karen Melvin/R3/USEPA/US@EPA, Michael Dunn/R3/USEPA/US@EPA, Jacqueline Morrison/R3/USEPA/US@EPA, Jessica Greathouse/R3/USEPA/US@EPA, Angela McFadden/R3/USEPA/US@EPA, Jennifer Lynn/R3/USEPA/US@EPA, Richard Killian/R3/USEPA/US@EPA, James VanOrden/R3/USEPA/US@EPA, Marcos Aquino/R3/USEPA/US, Bill Jones/R3/USEPA/US@EPA, Peter Gold/R3/USEPA/US@EPA, Humane Zia/R3/USEPA/US@EPA, Terri-A White/R3/USEPA/US@EPA, Thomas Damm/R3/USEPA/US@EPA, Terry Simpson/ESC/R3/USEPA/US@EPA
Date: 12/07/2011 11:57 AM

Subject: FYI - Formal Request for ATSDR Health Consultation - Dimock PA Drinking Water

----- Forwarded by Angela McFadden/R3/USEPA/US on 12/07/2011 11:56 AM -----

From: Jon Capacasa/R3/USEPA/US
To: Robert Helverson/R3/USEPA/US@EPA, Lora Werner/R3/USEPA/US@EPA
Cc: William Early/R3/USEPA/US@EPA, Michael DAndrea/R3/USEPA/US@EPA, KarenD Johnson/R3/USEPA/US@EPA, Victoria Binetti/R3/USEPA/US@EPA
Date: 12/07/2011 11:41 AM
Subject: Formal Request for ATSDR Health Consultation - Dimock PA Drinking Water

Lora and Bob-

Thank you for your ongoing work in the informal review of drinking water data associated with the Dimock PA private drinking water contamination matter. At this time, we would like to formally request that ATSDR conduct a Health Consultation on the individual contaminant risks as well as the cumulative risk of the various compounds found in the private wells in and around the Dimock, PA area.

Bob has been actively involved in informally reviewing the voluminous data from multiple sources in the area associated with the PA DEP's investigation of the gas production wells drilled by Cabot Oil. We believe that the private wells in and around the Dimock area have been negatively impacted by the Cabot natural gas drilling process as evidenced by the presence of methane, butane, propane, ethane, ethene, etc., related gas compounds and also the presence of high concentrations of secondary contaminants like aluminum, iron, manganese, etc.

We have recently received additional data identifying additional organic chemicals, not previously identified in data received on December 2, 2011, covering August and September 2011 samples. Please add this to the data already under review. These more recent samples also show organic contaminants present in samples which we do not have maximum contaminant levels established in drinking water, including Butyl benzyl phthalate, Triethylene Glycol and 2 Methoxyethanol among others. We are unsure at what levels these individual contaminants present health risks, or what cumulative effects these and the secondary contaminants might have on the health of persons drinking the water. Given that the residents are potentially in contact through dermal, inhalation and ingestion pathways, if you should identify any potential health threats please notify us as soon as possible.

This is an urgent matter to the Agency so completion of your review within the next two months is requested. You should use Karen Johnson of our Ground Water and Enforcement Branch in Water Protection Division as your main point of contact on the data analysis and should you have any questions. Thank you for your assistance with this matter.

Jon M. Capacasa, Director
Water Protection Division
EPA Region III